

### III. REMARKS

The Examiner has objected to claim 1 as being indefinite. The Applicant respectfully disagrees and directs the Examiner's attention to page 17, lines 28-30 of the specification that state "[t]he pure air is discharged once again from the cleaning chamber 46 through at least one suction channel 52 arranged on each side of the reticles in the vicinity of an insertion slot (see also Fig. 18). It is submitted that, one skilled in the art would clearly understand the meaning and scope of the language in claim 1, especially when reading the language in light of the specification and drawings. The objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102, or in the alternative as being obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103 in view of Jackson. The applicants respectfully disagree. Jackson does not disclose or suggest the features called for in claims 1-7 so as to anticipate or render claims 1-7 obvious.

For example, amongst other features claim 1 calls for a closable housing, having at least one closable loading opening for loading and unloading reticles into the closable housing. The disclosure in Jackson has been addressed at length in Applicant's prior response, the comments of which are incorporated by reference herein. As noted before, Jackson discloses for example in Figs. 3A-3B, 4A-4B) a processing apparatus having an open-architecture. As seen best in Fig. 4A, the housing 44 in Jackson has an open architecture, and is not closable. Jackson fails to disclose that housing 44 has closable loading ports/openings through which

reticles are loaded or unloaded from the housing. In col. 6, lines 56-61, Jackson discloses that housing 44 has open inlet 46 and open outlet 43, and fails to make any mention of the inlet/outlet being closable. Indeed, it does not appear possible to close the inlet/outlet in Jackson because in Jackson it appears that the conveyor 86 extends through what appear to be (continuously or unclosable) open inlet and outlet ports 46, 48 of housing 44. Moreover, Jackson expressly and specifically distinguishes the open architecture of the cleaning cell housing 44 from a closable housing (e.g. stating in col. 7, lines 34-38 that clean box 44 with its open architecture provides in line automation and col. 6, lines 15-20 that a closed cabinet, wherein the substrate placed into the cabinet through some type of door, does not allow for in line or on-line automation in contrast to clean box 44. Clearly, the cleaning housing or shroud 44 in Jackson cannot reasonably be considered a closable housing with a closable loading opening as otherwise called for in claim 1.

The Examiner further relies on the disclose in Fig. 1A of Jackson. In Fig. 1A, Jackson discloses a conventional batch processing apparatus utilizing a closed cabinet. However, Fig. 1A by itself fails to disclose the features called for in claim 1 (other than an apparently closable housing). Moreover, Jackson contrasts the apparatus in Fig. 1A (see col. 5, lines 60-64, calling it complex and costly) relative to the open architecture apparatus disclosed in Figs. 3A,-3B, 4A-4B. Indeed, the teaching of Jackson to allow employment of an open architecture apparatus, with an open housing 44 (rather than closable as in Fig. 1A) is precisely opposite to the apparatus shown in Fig. 1A,. Thus,

there would be no motivation from the disclosure in Jackson alone, to one skilled in the art to eliminate the open architecture housing 44 of the open architecture system disclosed in Figs. 3A-3B, 4A-4B and replace it with, what Jackson itself identifies as undesirable, the closed housing shown in Fig. 1A. Jackson fails to disclose or suggest the features recited in claim 1. Jackson also fails to disclose or suggest amongst other features that both the cleaning and detection device are located inside the closable housing as is also called for in claim 1. Claim 7 is patentable for similar reasons.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for a any extension of time and any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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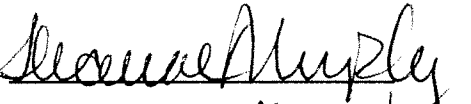
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